

Current Economic Programs Printed Survey Results: by the *Quarterly Financial Report* Statistics Users Respondent Base

U.S. Census Bureau
Current Economic Statistics User Survey

OMB CQM-26 (Rev.5/5/98)

I. DATA CONTENT

Your answers identifying the survey data you use will help us understand our users' patterns of data use.

1. Which Current Economic Statistics from the Census Bureau do you use? (Mark all that apply.)

(1) Monthly

0.0%;	0	None
68.1%;	94	Retail Sales
55.8%;	77	Wholesale Trade
73.9%;	102	Manufacturing/Trade Inventory/Sales
58.7%;	81	Housing Starts
47.8%;	66	Building Permits
50.0%;	69	New Home Sales
41.3%;	57	Value of New Construction Put in Place
33.3%;	46	Housing Completions
27.5%;	38	Expenditures for Residential Improvements
32.6%;	45	New Residential Construction
20.3%;	28	New Mobile Home Placements
60.1%;	83	Monthly Imports and Exports
63.0%;	87	Current Industrial Reports
71.0%;	98	Manufacturers' Shipments, Inventories, Orders

Replies 138; Forms 149

(2) Quarterly

100.0%;	149	Quarterly Financial Report
66.4%;	99	Current Industrial Reports
5.4%;	8	Federal Assistance Awards Data System
11.4%;	17	Quarterly Tax Survey
8.1%;	12	Quarterly Public Employee Retirement

Replies 149; Forms 149

(3) Annual

53.6%;	74	Annual Retail Trade
50.0%;	69	Annual (Wholesale) Trade
26.8%;	37	Annual Survey of Communications
29.0%;	40	Transportation Annual Survey
31.9%;	44	Service Annual Survey
44.2%;	61	County Business Patterns

23.9%;	33	ZIP Code Business Patterns
49.3%;	68	Statistics of U.S. Businesses
25.4%;	35	Characteristics of New Housing
26.1%;	36	Annual Building Permits
21.7%;	30	New Residential Construction in Selected Metropolitan Areas
46.4%;	64	Annual Capital Expenditures
77.5%;	107	Annual Survey of Manufactures
68.8%;	95	Current Industrial Reports
39.1%;	54	Research and Development Survey
44.2%;	61	Plant Capacity Utilization
11.6%;	16	Education Finance Survey
14.5%;	20	State Tax Collection Survey
10.1%;	14	Annual Public Employee Retirement
13.8%;	19	Annual Survey of Public Employment
13.0%;	18	Consolidated Federal Funds Report
21.0%;	29	State Government Finances
48.6%;	67	Annual Imports and Exports

Replies 138; Forms 149

II. DATA DELIVERY

The Census Bureau is considering use of the Internet as the primary method of data delivery. By completing the following questions, you will help us retain the most essential delivery formats and design the best possible data delivery service.

(4) 2. How do you receive current economic data now? (Mark all that apply.)

89.9%;	133	Printed Publications	19.6%;	29	Diskettes
75.0%;	111	World Wide Web (Internet)	18.2%;	27	Direct (E-mail) delivery
31.8%;	47	CD-ROMs	1.4%;	2	Regular mail
23.0%;	34	FAX	5.4%;	8	Other

Replies 148; Forms 149

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- EBB (of Stat-USA) Phone calls
 - Economic Bulletin Board
 - Library
 - Electronic "Bulletin Boards"
 - Internet, ProNet
 - STAT-Usa Bulletin Board
 - Overnight Delivery of NIA data
 - Subscribe to America Statistic Index on Microfiche
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(5) 3. What format do you PREFER when downloading data for further manipulation? (Mark all that apply.)

63.2%;	84	Spreadsheet (e.g., wkl, xls, etc...)
27.1%;	36	Database (e.g., dbf, mdb, etc...)
24.1%;	32	ASCII delimited
23.3%;	31	ASCII flat files
19.5%;	26	Retrieve from print or screen and enter manually
16.5%;	22	Do not manipulate data
2.3%;	3	Other

Replies 133; Forms 149

- Sas data sets
- PDF formats were the best

4. What capabilities do you want on the Census Internet site? (For each line, indicate the degree of your preferences, from 5 [high] to 1 [low].)

(6) a. Direct (E-mail) delivery:

52.0%;	65	5	16.8%;	21	3	7.2%;	9	1
12.8%;	16	4	4.0%;	5	2	7.2%;	9	Don't know

Replies 125; Forms 149

(7) b. E-mail notification:

43.9%;	54	5	18.7%;	23	3	5.7%;	7	1
15.4%;	19	4	9.8%;	12	2	6.5%;	8	Don't know

Replies 123; Forms 149

(8) c. Retrieve/display to screen:

54.2%;	65	5	15.8%;	19	3	5.8%;	7	1
15.8%;	19	4	0.8%;	1	2	7.5%;	9	Don't know

Replies 120; Forms 149

(9) d. Search:

74.0%;	97	5	10.7%;	14	3	0.0%;	0	1
10.7%;	14	4	0.8%;	1	2	3.8%;	5	Don't know

Replies 131; Forms 149

(10) e. Download complete data sets:

64.1%;	82	5	11.7%;	15	3	1.6%;	2	1
11.7%;	15	4	6.2%;	8	2	4.7%;	6	Don't know

Replies 128; Forms 149

(11) f. Download selected data:

76.7%;	99	5	7.0%;	9	3	1.6%;	2	1
8.5%;	11	4	2.3%;	3	2	3.9%;	5	Don't know

Replies 129; Forms 149

(12) g. Software help/tutorials:

25.0%;	29	5	31.9%;	37	3	8.6%;	10	1
17.2%;	20	4	12.1%;	14	2	5.2%;	6	Don't know

Replies 116; Forms 149

(13) h. Publication-quality printing:

35.4%;	45	5	22.8%;	29	3	9.4%;	12	1
15.7%;	20	4	12.6%;	16	2	3.9%;	5	Don't know

Replies 127; Forms 149

(14) i. Charts and graphs:

33.9%;	43	5	18.1%;	23	3	11.0%;	14	1
15.0%;	19	4	16.5%;	21	2	5.5%;	7	Don't know

Replies 127; Forms 149

(15) j. Geographic maps:

27.5%;	33	5	15.0%;	18	3	15.8%;	19	1
16.7%;	20	4	15.8%;	19	2	9.2%;	11	Don't know

Replies 120; Forms 149

(16) k. Other, please specify:

72.7%;	8	electronic bulletin board	27.3%;	3	Other
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Replies 11; Forms 149

- Publications like QFR to be in spreadsheet format or mdb for easy data manipulation after downloading.
 - Internet site very important to receive data from.
 - Update full report at release time
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(17) l. Electronic Bulletin Board (To collect write-ins)

0.0%;	0	5	0.0%;	0	3	0.0%;	0	1
0.0%;	0	4	0.0%;	0	2	0.0%;	0	Don't know

Replies 0; Forms 149

III. DATA USAGE

Your answers describing how you use the data will help us design the most effective Current Economic Statistics retrieval tool.

(18) 5. Do you combine/compare/merge data from more than one source listed in Question 1?

28.7%;	41	No	71.3%;	102	Yes
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Replies 143; Forms 149

(19) 6. What time periods do you consider when using these data? (Mark X all that apply.)

62.3%;	86	trends up to 5 years	47.1%;	65	latest 1 or 2 periods
60.9%;	84	5+ years	0.0%;	0	Other
48.6%;	67	trends up to 1 year			

Replies 138; Forms 149

(20) 7. How do you use the data? (Mark all that apply.)

52.2%;	72	Create value-added products/services
40.6%;	56	Perform patron/client inquiries
26.8%;	37	Inform marketing decisions
26.1%;	36	Inform investment decisions
25.4%;	35	Republish in newspaper/journal
16.7%;	23	Store reports/printouts for archival purposes
6.5%;	9	Locate new sites
0.0%;	0	Other

Replies 138; Forms 149

- [none]
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(21) 8. What explanatory information do you consult when using these data? (Mark all that apply.)

71.0%;	93	Definition of terms
58.0%;	76	Sampling and estimation methodology
54.2%;	71	Narrative text describing survey results
48.1%;	63	Survey design
12.2%;	16	None
0.8%;	1	Other

Replies 131; Forms 149

- Explanations of data changes/revisions
-

(22) 9. Do you have any pressing data or information needs that are not currently being met?

- Estimate of sales from space-based telecommunications.
- We are very much interested in unadjusted counterparts of tables 7 & 8 of the FT900 release being made available on internet on the day of release. Publications like QFR also need to be made available in spreadsheet or mdb for us to further manipulate data.
- No. Increasingly more and more data sets are becoming available electronically-which makes our work easier by eliminating manual inputing of data.
- Value of the U.S. apparel protection reported in the CIR - Need URGENTLY!!
- No.
- No.
- If I request "personal incom 1989-1992 monthly", the database would show me what I requested data.
- Capital Outlays Quarterly By Industry
- None.
- I need detailed tract data by state, in addition to country. Export restrictions by country and region are more important than before (move in demand).
- Information on nonresidential construction.
- "807" Production-sharing trade at the 2-digit SIC level showing total U.S. import value and the value of U.S. components sent offshore for assembly.
- Imports and Exports by SIC code; 3 or 4 digit. Move industry detail in M3 report.
- No.
- Timely release of data in an easy-to-access format (ie: XLS, 123, etc.) with revisions and option of pulling complete time series.
- The availability of Residential and Commercial Building Permit Data.
- We need all stats available for the Jewelry Industry especially by geographic region.
- No.
- Better capital expenditure data and Better motor vehicle data.
- Keeping ____ disaggregated data sets ____ possible that are consistent, and therefore directly

- comparable is very helpful.
- We are always looking for very current information. We normally use Census data for historical trends and background.
- More detailed annual (quarterly) production data on high technologies (electronics).
- Business starts by SIC at the County level.
- The 1997 Census is not out yet.
- Quarterly Financial data that separates publishing from printing (SIC 27)
- Place and regional economic data sets in relation to population/race trends.
- Move capital expenditure data--more frequent, more detailed
- Service Data on an annual/quarterly/monthly basis by 2,3, & 4-digit SIC!
- Relate the measure "value added less total compensation of employees net income/operating profit and corresponding equity capital/total capital employed.
- Advanced Retail numbers should have "jewelry stores".
- Website is extremely difficult to navigate.
- Economic data for lower half and upper half of the work force.
- Median income and poverty tables are not in spreadsheet form (they once were).
- More Detailed Segmenting
- MSA retail sales
- Monthly service sector sales counterpart data as to retail, wholesale, and manufacturing shipments.
- Export - Import (more current data) by metal producers
- We have a need for long historical time series and for long-term forecasts.
- Commercial Building Permits County level on a timely basis.
- Non-residential building permit data collection should be restored by state and metro area!
- As a foreign academic library, we are concerned about cost of access.

IV. INDUSTRY CLASSIFICATION ISSUES

We will soon begin restructuring the Current Economic Surveys based on the new North American Industry Classification System (NAICS). Your answers will help us ensure that these surveys continue to provide the economic information needed by markets, policy makers, and business people. For more information on NAICS, see the Bureau's web site: <http://www.census.gov/NAICS>.

(24) 10. At what levels of detail do you MOST FREQUENTLY USE industry data classified by Standard Industrial Classification (SIC)? (Mark all that apply.)

72.8%;	99 4-digit industries (or maximum detail I can get)
47.1%;	64 Sector totals (SIC division); e.g., Manufacturing or Retail Trade
41.9%;	57 2-digit major groups
41.2%;	56 3-digit industry groups
5.9%;	8 NA (don't use SIC-based data)
4.4%;	6 Other

Replies 136; Forms 149

- 6 TO 10 digit
 - 7-digit in some cases
 - Greater detail when available
 - sub-groups within 4-digit
 - Would like to have 6 or 7 digit SIC
 - Product Codes
-

(25) 11. Were you aware that the SIC system is being replaced by the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS)?

21.3%;	30 I was unaware of this
32.6%;	46 I am partially aware, but lack details
46.1%;	65 I am aware and understand some implications

12. Would you like to receive more information about NAICS?

(26) Yes, please send me - (Mark all that apply)

92.2%;	95	A brochure that explains NAICS	35.0%;	36	Conference announcements
65.0%;	67	NAICS implementation plans	5.8%;	6	Other

Replies 103; Forms 149

- A copy
 - Comparison-SIC VS. NAICS Similar to when SIC definitions change.
 - E-Mail to me
 - Definitions of NAICS codes.
 - I am awaiting CD-ROM!
 - Already know
-

(27) No Thanks -

63.2%;	24	I will check the Census Bureau's web site (www.census.gov/naics)
36.8%;	14	I don't need more information about NAICS

Replies 38; Forms 149

V. USER PROFILE

Please tell us about yourself so we may serve you better.

(28) 13. Type of organization.

47.1%;	66	Business	6.4%;	9	Individual
15.0%;	21	Government	4.3%;	6	Media
14.3%;	20	Academic/Research	4.3%;	6	Other
8.6%;	12	Association			

Replies 140; Forms 149

- Information and consulting firm
 - Chamber of Commerce
 - Market Research/Publishing
 - Economics Consulting
 - Labor Union
 - Library (University)
-

(29) 14. Do you work in your organization's library?

30.7%;	43	Yes	69.3%;	97	No
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Replies 140; Forms 149

(30) 15. What is your affiliation with the Census Bureau?

83.0%;	117	None	1.4%;	2	Census Information Center
5.0%;	7	Business/Industry Data Center	8.5%;	12	Other
2.1%;	3	State Data Center			

- Need statistical info on Jewelry Industry.
- Former Advisory Committee member and CES researcher.
- Federal User
- Employed by US DOC/BXA
- Provider of Business Data to the Census Bureau
- Government
- Depository
- Affiliate Data Center
- Economist
- Data use.
- GPO Depository
- Associate Data Center

(35) 20. May we contact you to follow up on this questionnaire?

74.5%; 102 Yes

25.5%; 35 No

Replies 137; Forms 149

(36) Question 21. Remarks:

- It would be nice to have all reports available in spreadsheets format. For any publication reports that contain large tables and data, mdb file format would be an ideal too.
- We greatly appreciate this survey. I'd like to stress one major concern we have: As you move toward complete Internet delivery of data--please continue to publish "hard copies" of the economic reports for us to compare as backup. We have noticed that occasionally there are errors in Electronic Bulletin Board and Internet files--so we rely on the hard copy as backup. We use it as a safeguard. Thank you and feel free to contact me at your convenience.
- We would like to be placed on your mailing list to regularly receive the publications as check-marked on the attached listing form.

Sincerely, William A. Rossi

- The Bureau of the Census information is becoming increasingly important to our readers and clients. The better quality of data has helped readers and clients become more internationally competitive. Keep up the good job!
- The Bureau of the Census has done a great job with its web sites. With the exception of some unpublished data, everything is available through the internet. The unpublished data is received by direct e-mail.
- A published paper version should always be made available for purchase to the public. Information being available on the internet is nice, yet it is a completely different animal than having a hard copy version of the information. An example: I can receive my news off the internet, but I still prefer to get my newspaper in the morning for reading at my leisure away from a computer.
- Census bureau data is always helpful--the data you provide enhances our publication and enables readers to make informal business decisions.
- Over the past several months, I have begun to utilize the U.S. Census Bureau's web site, specifically the economic briefing room. I use this information in conjunction with the Kiplinger letter to keep up with marketing analysts. Having the information on the web makes it very easy to access. Thanks!
- You have set up an excellent web site that is easy to use, fast and usually supplies me with the information I'm seeking.
- Census data has proven invaluable to in-depth country comparisons of productivity in sectors extremely valuable organization.

Please keep going with the detailed data, comparable time series (IS NAICS comparable?) and

- aggregate numbers.
- Your credibility is a great strength.
- Would like more detail on Semiconductor Industry (SIC 3674) and SIC 3661 & 3669 communications equipment. Also, computers SIC 3575,3577,3578, 35,79. Would like more details on subcategories in terms of sales dollars and total units sold.
- Respondent provided voluminous, illegible comments throughout that could not be deciphered to record.
- State and Local Government Finance Estimates, by State. We appreciate having this information on the Internet but wish the report was still published. Is there any way of compiling the data sooner? It is almost too old to be of any use.
- We look forward to working with you on the upcoming Census.
- Current setup on the web is extremely frustratingly for someone trying to print/download data and reports

-> Make .XLS files available with lots of historical data.

___ Use .PDF filrds for pasting your releases -Having to flow ascii into a word processor and reformat is not the way to go. Email sub would be helpful

- I appreciate receiving this survey.
- I will be continuing my studies in Europe from where I will communicate with my colleagues.
- Would be helpful if classes were offered in best techniques when seeking govt. data on the Web.

Location on Web tha would state what media given U.S. Govt. was available in (papers, Internet, etc.)

- We have developed "Productivity Enhancement and Control (Peacon) Plan." This plan will solve 20 major economic problems of the U.S. and provide about \$10,000 to all wage earners earning up to \$200,000. It will double the minimum wage, reduce unemployment to 2% reduce poverty to 2% and provide health care benefits and solve other economic problems. Over 98% of the work force will benefit at the the cost of upper 2%, whose income will be reduced considerably.
- Please update my address in your records. Thanks!
- This survey does not actually pertain to our form. We are a small business and are not Internet capable.
- We love the Census Bureau! Clear publications indices and ease of search engines on the Internet site are very important to us. Also, choice of how to download data is good, not all users need or can use spreadsheet software.
- More documentation and instructions for obtaining data from gohper directories would be helpful.
- I appreciate the value of your service! Educators use information for social profit.

Figure 1: